Volume 4
June 2017

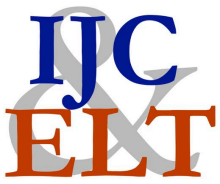
International Journal of Christianity & English Language Teaching

A refereed, online journal on Christianity and ELT

The *International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching* is a free, open access publication from the Christian English Language Educators Association (CELEA, see http://www.celea.net or http://celea.wildapricot.org/), an international, non-profit association for those in English language teaching.

The *IJC&ELT* is also supported by the Department of Applied Linguistics and TESOL in the Cook School of Intercultural Studies at Biola University in La Mirada, California. Visit http://cook.biola.edu/programs/linguistics-tesol/ for more information. The *IJC&ELT* gratefully acknowledges this support.

The *IJC&ELT* acronym logo and cover page title were designed by Daniel McClary (Daniel.McClary@Millersville.edu), of Millersville University of Pennsylvania, on behalf of CELEA. This service to the *IJC&ELT* is appreciated.



International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching
Volume 4 (June 2017)
edited by Michael Lessard-Clouston & Michael Pasquale

The editors express their appreciation to all the referees who volunteered their time and expertise in reading, interacting with, and evaluating the manuscripts they received. We are also grateful for grad student editorial assistant Andy Edmondson's work on Vol. 4.

Typeset in Times New Roman

ISSN 2334-1866 (online)

International Journal of Christianity and English Language Teaching, Volume 4 (2017), pp. 66-80.
ISSN 2334-1866 (online)

Reviews

English Teaching and Evangelical Mission: The Case of Lighthouse School
Bill Johnston. Bristol, U.K.: Multilingual Matters, 2017.
Pp. xiii + 174, $39.95 (paper), ISBN 978-1-78309-706-7.

Reviewed by Mary Shepard Wong, Azusa Pacific University

Bill Johnston's well-written account of his insightful one-year ethnography in a church-based school in Poland is not to be missed. Be forewarned that you might find it hard to put it down. I had just completed chapter one when a power outage left our home pitch dark. But I read it through to the end, first by the light from my phone, and when that failed, by candlelight. I found the book a fine example of ethnographic fieldwork with numerous insights and challenges for Christian English language teachers.

It's not often you find an in-depth study of evangelical teachers written by an atheist, so the question arises as to why. A study of evangelicals is justified, Johnston states, as this group makes up a significant portion of humanity. And a study of evangelicals involved in teaching English even more so, because in spite of the of recent discussions and publications about the negative aspects of evangelical English teachers in missions, actual evidenced-based studies of what teachers of faith do in the classroom are not as common. And it is "evidence," Johnston contends, that is needed "to justify (or allay) our concerns" (p. 162). I might add, research on classroom practices focusing on the interaction and intersections of faith and the learning and teaching of languages is needed not just to respond to concerns, but also to gain more nuanced understandings of language teacher identity, a growing area of interest in English language teaching. It is studies like this, which includes an impressive 44 classroom recordings and 45 interviews conducted over a full school year, that can shed light on the impact of faith and teaching.

Johnston introduces himself as an outsider with many questions, the major one being, how is evangelical Christianity related to the global spread of the English language? His earlier work with Varghese left him wanting to know more about evangelicals, who he found fascinating because he found them so different from himself. Thus he positions himself as an outsider seeking to understand the Other, as he sates, remaining "firm in [his] own beliefs," while allowing "other people [to] be firm in theirs" (p. 39). This outsider's stance is of interest

to those of us on the inside, for he is able to accomplish what qualitative researchers long for, namely, to make the familiar strange.

Summary

Johnston makes it clear that his study is ethnographic and thus he focuses on the particular. As such, Johnston makes no attempt to try to generalize his findings to all church-based programs with bible-based curriculum either in Poland or elsewhere. Readers must judge the extent to which what he finds at Lighthouse School (a pseudonym) may be similar to what they may experience in their own or other contexts to see if there are points of application.

The book has nine assessable chapters, with the first three serving as introductions to the book (chapter 1), the context of Poland (chapter 2), and the related literature (chapter 3). The next three chapters describe the details of the "school with a soul" and its missionary teachers (p. 40, chapter 4), the Bible-based curriculum and materials (chapter 5), and specific exchanges that took place in the classroom (chapter 6). The final three chapters describe some of Johnston's more significant findings at Lighthouse, namely "false-bottomed friendships" in relationships (p. 99, chapter 7), "empty meeting grounds" in cross-cultural relations (p. 126, chapter 8), and a lack of awareness of imperialism and neocolonialism found in the thinking of the teachers (chapter 9).

As to whether he found evidence of covertness, coercion, and conversions, Johnston says not really. In fact conversion, to his surprise, was not the teachers' goal at all, nor was it accomplished during his year there. What the teachers were seeking, he states, was ministering to their students' spiritual needs (p. 154). That said, Johnston did find evidence of thinking that he felt was in alignment with Western capitalistic values and he believed the missionary teachers were not aware of the naivety of some of their efforts (p. 156). Also disturbing to him was the lack of the missionaries' proficiency in Polish, for as Johnston notes such unequal language use is typical of hegemonic and colonial relations (p. 155).

Commentary

This book-length study yields much for Christians to consider. It was validating to see Johnston expose and problematize the "condescension and scorn" (p. 3) that evangelicals are subject to in our field. He describes an anecdote of academics rolling their eyes and making deprecating comments when a new Christian student spoke of his faith at an orientation session

for his MA TESOL program. Johnston remarks that this may not have happened if the student were Buddhist or Muslim. He warns that all evangelicals should not be tarred with the same brush, and states, "no other religious group is treated with such cavalier contempt by supposedly open-minded liberals" (p. 3).

Yet unfortunately the diversity of evangelicals is not rendered in much detail in this book. An academic colleague sent me his thoughts on this very issue, after skimming Johnston's book. This colleague wrote:

> The indisputable fact is that intelligent, sincere, fair-minded adherents to evangelical faith can't begin to agree on what the Bible actually says. To illustrate, self-identified "evangelicals" in North America hold beliefs across the continua listed below:
> • View of the Bible (**legal constitution** ←→ community library)
> • Inerrancy (**error-free** ←→ inspired and authoritative)
> • Genesis (**literal (young-earth creationism)** ←→ metaphorical)
> • Relation to non-Christians (**exclusivist** ←→ inclusivist)
> • Gender difference (**men in authority over women in church/home** ←→ gender equality)
> • American nationalism (**divine destiny/"Christian nation"** ←→ ideological idol)
> • Military service (**"just war"** ←→ pacifism and nonviolence)
> • Economic inequality (**natural** ←→ unjust)
> • Wealth (**a blessing from God** ←→ the result of unjust social relations)
> • Climate change (**"hoax"** ←→ priority #1)
> • Homosexuality (**perverted choice** ←→ unchosen orientation [Goshen, Eastern Mennonite])
>
> Personal communication (February 16, 2017)

The diversity my colleague outlined is not found in Johnston's study, analysis, or discussion, which might have implications for future research, which is where we now turn.

Johnston states that future research needs to be conducted on other continents, among other populations, and across other religious divides. This research needs to include not just data from teacher interviews and surveys (as most of the current studies do), but also data from students and other stakeholders and observations of classrooms. I would add that studies of evangelicals from the wide continuum of believers need to be considered. Moreover, researchers need to be not just insiders (i.e., evangelicals), but also outsiders (like Johnston). Finally, Johnston states that the "insidious trend" of people with the same beliefs isolating themselves from those who think differently needs to end, as it encourages intolerance. He concludes with the following:

> [I]t is my deepest belief that understanding and dialogue are the only valid ways to engage with those different from ourselves. The alternative is disrespect, dismissal, scorn, fear – and, eventually, conflict and violence. This book has been my small attempt to listen and understand. (p. 164)

Thanks for listening, Bill. I hear you. And thanks to those at Lighthouse School, who opened their lives and work to this thoughtful investigation.

Mary Shepard Wong (mwong@apu.edu) is Professor in the Global Studies, Sociology, and TESOL Department at Azusa Pacific University where she directs the TESOL Field-based program. She is a two-time Fulbright Scholar and was the lead editor of two Routledge volumes and one with Multilingual Matters (in press) on faith and teaching.

Professional Guidelines for Christian English Teachers:
How to Be a Teacher with Convictions While Respecting Those of Your Students
Kitty Barnhouse Purgason. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2016.
Pp. vii + 221, $13.99 (paper), ISBN 9-780878-084975.

Reviewed by Cheri Pierson, Wheaton College Graduate School

This book is for committed Christ followers teaching English to speakers of other languages. The author intends to fill a gap in the professional literature by providing a practical handbook for those Christian English teachers (CETs) "who want more ideas at the level of methodology and classroom techniques" (p. 8).

Summary

The book has three sections. Part 1 establishes the biblical foundation of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:27-39). Purgason states, "CETs who choose to be guided by their Master, Jesus, and by the Bible's Great Commission and Great Commandment will engage in good deeds and gentle conversations. They will speak plainly, listen carefully and serve humbly" (p. 17). Also addressed in this section are goals and models that may influence both content and methodology at the program level. The author suggests that CETs can be more effective if they have a clear understanding of educational goals and effective models for their work and ministry (p. 37).

Part 2 focuses on a series of ongoing issues in education, such as transparency in the role of a teacher, respectful relationships with students and peers, and engaging in sound teaching practice both inside and outside the classroom. For example, in chapter 4, "This Is

Who I Am," Purgason provides multiple examples illustrating how CETs can be respectful, appropriate and clear about their identities (p. 48). In chapter 5, "Going Deep: Questions About What's Important," she provides meaningful question frameworks for students at different proficiency levels in a range of English language learning environments.

Part 3 provides more teaching ideas, with specific suggestions using lesson plans for songs, a video, a short story, and poetry, as well as additional classroom techniques. One such suggestion is lesson planning and classroom activities that are based on sayings, proverbs or quotations, and another is for adding more as one uses their published textbook.

Commentary

Purgason's extensive international experience makes her a well-qualified author for just such a text. Her background growing up in a missionary family in India provided a foundation for her career and ministry. Extensive international teaching in a range of contexts revealed her calling to language teaching. Currently her position in TESOL training at Biola University allows her to contribute knowledge and experience to English language teachers worldwide.

I highly recommend this book to anyone involved with both EFL and ESL learners. The examples focus on young adult and adult learners but the guidelines may also be applied to teachers working with younger students. Purgason does not hesitate to confront challenging issues, but presents these with clarity and respect in a manner easily applied in most any educational environment. In conclusion, this book provides meaningful guidelines for instructors concerned with excellence and integrity in both their personal identities and public service as CETs who honor their Lord wherever they serve.

Cheri Pierson (cheri.pierson@wheaton.edu) is an Associate Professor of TESOL at Wheaton College Graduate School and specializes in teacher education, curriculum development, and English for theological purposes.

Religious Faith and Teacher Knowledge in English Language Teaching
Bradley Baurain. Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015.
Pp. xi + 176, $71.95 (hardcover), ISBN 978-1-4438-8262-0.

Reviewed by Thor Sawin, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey

Introduction

In this unique cultural moment of academic activism, the field of language education is embracing the power of language teachers to inculcate social justice, humility, tolerance of difference, and environmental responsibility. Bradley Baurain (p. 49) quotes Zimmerman (2006, p. 208) saying, "all educators are missionaries." Given this context, the arrival of a robust academic treatment of religious faith in language teachers is unsurprising – more surprising perhaps is how *non*-activist the teachers interviewed in this book are. While some critical scholars (i.e., Edge, 2003) describe active faith at odds with teacher professionalism, Baurain's interviewees see their professionalism as the primary and rather pedestrian way to embody their faith.

Despite the pervasiveness of religious belief among academics (pp. 30-33), Baurain carefully documents both the absence of this belief from research on teacher knowledge, and the open critiques of many scholars regarding Christianity in language teaching. This book-length response to such critics analyzes novice teachers' intersectionality in their established identity as Christians and their emerging identity as TESOL professionals. Christians who have taught English overseas will recognize these teachers' struggles both to balance Christian values of humility, mercy and grace with the professional obligations to authority, objectivity, and fairness, and also to not let love of "being learnéd" crowd out "the love of learning" (p. 108, accent added). While sharing Smith's (1999) skepticism about potential "Christian" methods for teaching, Baurain compellingly presents teachers' struggles to teach Christian*ly* (as adverb) in settings where being explicitly Christian (as adjective) is inappropriate.

Summary

After defining the constructs of *teacher knowledge* and *novice teachers*, chapter 1 innovatively demarcates the gap in the literature by ringing it with five separate literature reviews: teacher morality and values, teacher spirituality, teacher religious beliefs, educational sociology of language and religion, and Christian educational settings. This treatment is accessible to anyone interested in teacher formation regardless of religious affiliation, and draws on educational philosophy, sociology, and composition studies in addition to applied linguistics. The reminder that all truth is God's truth underlies the book's overarching theme that language teaching is in itself a true vocation, not merely a position.

Chapter 2 describes the participants – 11 of Baurain's former American students in a Christian TESOL certificate program teaching in Southeast Asia – and analysis. Participants underwent two one-hour interviews. The first was more philosophical, connecting faith and profession and also soliciting responses to two hypothetical situations. The second prompted reflection on professional training and critical incidents.

Chapter 3 highlights three main themes – professionality, relationality, witness – and teachers' different approaches to navigating the tension between actively looking for opportunities to make faith visible, and not wanting to take advantage of the role accorded as a teacher.

Chapter 4 presents four short case studies, of two novice and two more experienced teachers, illustrating a range of discursive metaphors used to integrate faith and professionalism. While refreshing and convicting, these teachers nevertheless engage in some othering when they describe the non-professionalism they perceive in local teaching practices (which usually have a sensible historical genesis), their unique concern for low-achieving learners, and the gift of learning the local language.

Chapter 5 explores witness in greater depth across the data set. Teachers framed witness as being recognizably distinct, as applying theology (such as incarnation) to teaching, and as professionalism – eschewing the low-hanging fruit of Christian holiday lessons in favor of cultivating critical thinking and rejecting consumerist/materialist identities on offer to learners.

Chapter 6 is most explicitly Baurain's answer to critical language educators, and to the constraints on discussing religious intersectionalities and intersubjectivities in intercultural teaching practice. He encourages those who find confining the exclusion of their faith identities from the considerations of the intercultural encounter of language teaching. Calling the field to abandon dichotomies and choices between religious and non-religious perspectives, he advocates Wolterstorff's (1999) epistemology of cross-perspectival learning and Canagarajah's (2009) view of witness as transformative education.

Commentary

Baurain admits that, as a construct, knowledge brings the inherent weakness of being internal. The interview questions seem also to privilege internal thought processes and hypothetical actions, with scant anecdotal detail about actual practices and almost none about

uptake among the interviewees' students. While Christianity, with its emphasis on inward revelation, may uniquely lend itself to internal and intrapersonal sense-making, linguistic anthropology cautions us that narratives rarely pre-exist the occasion for telling, and narrated truths are always co-created in the intersubjective space between speakers and the setting.

More reflexivity on the interviewer's own role in bringing these sense-making accounts into being would be welcome. Baurain acknowledges Smith's (1999) caution that fully-formed beliefs rarely precede any practice (pp. 142-143), yet readers are asked to trust Baurain that his participants' Christian identities are mature and ready-for-the-telling (p. 135), whereas their professional identities are still being developed. A start would be presenting data excerpts in conversational rather than block transcription, not erasing the pauses and fillers which enact the teller's interpersonal and epistemic stances toward narrated events. While the researcher's turns are present in a few places (pp. 86, 101) it is difficult to judge how follow-up questions or the researcher's shifts in tone might have signaled to interviewees which information was particularly sought-after or worth elaborating.

Citing Varghese and Johnston (2007) repeatedly, the book reads almost as an extended response to that article. While these scholars conceded that all teaching pursues transformation in students, they stated that religious witness is "surely of a different hue" (p. 26). Baurain (2015) twice counters that assertion with his own "surely not" (p. 138) and advocates both understanding religious academics in their own words, and teasing witness apart from other constructs like proselytizing or Western triumphalism.

Indeed 2017 is not 2007. Language teaching has never been more political and activist, while events troublingly conflate Christians in America and academia with isolationism, nationalism and corporatism – views which few Christian overseas teachers hold. Teachers feel trained and enjoined to call forth many changes in their learners, evidenced by the new fields of English for peace, social justice in SLA, and even social justice standards for teachers. Many of these movements align with social calls for cross-perspectival learning of the sort Wolterstorff (1999) recommends, when dominant ideologies need to learn from those with marked or marginalized ideologies and charitably and rigorously listen to others' stories.

While compellingly demonstrating that witness ("living out one's beliefs in purposeful ways so as to persuade others to accept them as true" – Baurain, 2007, p. 210) is as integral to critically-engaged language teaching as to Christian language teaching, Baurain is less

successful in addressing Western Christians' unawareness of the sociohistorical and political overtones in their teaching overseas. Baurain feels Varghese and Johnston unfairly held their interviewed pre-service teachers to "account for worldwide Christian missions efforts and history, including political implications and philosophical conflicts" (p. 47). Yet critics deserve to see such factors addressed. It is surprising that the interviews never elicited teachers' consideration of the complex, multiply-dominant roles they inhabit as native-English-speaking, American, and likely white teachers. While intersectionality is briefly addressed regarding faith and professional identity, it is noticeably absent when it comes to the power differentials in race, class, mobility, nationality, and language between the teachers and their students.

This matters because the participants themselves say that "distinction" is key to their Christian witness, yet how learners might tease Christian faith apart from these other differences when making sense of teachers' external behaviors and internal commitments is unclear. That may be what critical scholars most want from Christian scholarship – an acknowledgement that no matter what our personal or interpersonal motives are, they resonate chords of colonial history, which constrain how our actions and positions will be interpreted, no matter how they are intended. This is where the lack of any observation or attempt to contact learners is keenly felt, and ethnographic studies of Christian language teaching contexts (Johnston, 2017; Han, 2014) may partly offer the learners' side of the Christian teaching equation.

Baurain's attention to certificate holders instead of MA holders is refreshing, given how many TESOL certificates are awarded each year, but little was said of the methods advocated, apart from their being "communicative." Communicative methods constrain the kinds of teacher knowledge valued in a classroom, and are often awkwardly overlain on local ideologies of language instruction. Perhaps as certificate holders, there was less room in the curriculum to reflect on the political and identity aspects of language teaching than in an MA program, or perhaps Christians regardless of their program are more fluent at describing Christianity in terms of personal conviction than of political and historical trajectories.

While attention to sociohistorical context may be lacking, Baurain's interviewees are moving in their appreciation of Jesus as a master teacher, and this book is thought-provoking, and even convicting, to those who spend their time training Christians in the language teaching profession.

References

Baurain, B. (2007). Christian witness and respect for persons. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, *6*, 201-219. doi:10.1080/15348450701454221

Canagarajah, A. S. (2009). Can we talk? Finding a platform for dialogue among values-based professionals in post-positivist education. In M. S. Wong & A. S. Canagarajah (Eds.), *Christian and critical English language educators in dialogue: Pedagogical and ethical dilemmas* (pp. 75-86). New York: Routledge.

Edge, J. (2003). Imperial troopers and servants of the Lord: A vision of TESOL for the 21st century. *TESOL Quarterly*, *37*, 701-709. doi:10.2307/3588218

Johnston, B. (2017). *English teaching and evangelical mission: The case of Lighthouse School*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Han, H. (2014). Accessing English and networks at an English-medium multicultural church in East Canada: An Ethnography. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *70*, 220-245. doi:10.1353/cml.2014.0011

Smith, D. I. (1999). *The curious idea of a Christian teaching method*. Keynote address presented at the 8th Annual Conference of the North American Christian Foreign Language Association (NACFLA 1999), Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

Varghese, M., & Johnston, B. (2007). Evangelical Christians and English language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, *41*, 5-31. doi:10.1002/j.1545-7249.2007.tb00038.x

Wolterstorff, N. (1999). Can scholarship and Christian conviction mix? A new look at the integration of knowledge. *Journal of Education and Christian Belief*, *3*, 35-50.

Zimmerman, J. (2006). *Innocents abroad: American teachers in the American century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Thor Sawin (tsawin@miis.edu) has a Ph.D. in second language acquisition from the University of South Carolina, and has been an assistant professor in the TESOL/Teaching Foreign Languages department at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies since 2013. Additionally, he was on the English and German faculty at Christian universities in Lithuania, China, and South Korea, and also taught short-term in Taiwan, Ukraine, and Albania.

Scattering Seed in Teaching: Walking with Christ in the Field of Learning and Education

Brian Pickerd. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016.
Pp. xiii + 140, $21.00 (paper), ISBN 978-1-4982-3869-4.

Reviewed by Matthew Deal, Chesapeake Public Schools

Introduction

If you are seeking to integrate the mission of Jesus Christ with your profession as a teacher, then *Scattering Seed in Teaching* is a rare yet valuable resource for your pursuit. Both teacher trainers in Christian higher education and teachers who realize that their teaching job is their mission field will glean practical insights, wisdom, encouragement, and affirmation from this book. The author, Brian Pickerd, is a foreign language teacher in a public high school and a

part-time teacher trainer at a Christian University, and he shares his and others' rich experiences of how God worked through them to be His salt and light in the classroom and in the greater school community. Pickerd relates the analogy of our mission as Christ-following teachers who seek to sow positive seeds in our calling as teachers to his grandparents, who taught Pickard how to work on their farm during his youth. Thus the agrarian motif permeates this book as Pickerd adapts Jesus' parable of the sower (Matthew 13:1-23) to our "seed sowing" opportunities with students, their parents, fellow teachers, administrators, and the school community at large. Pickerd's stories come from the secondary public school setting, though he believes that other teachers, tutors, and homeschoolers can benefit from this book.

Summary

After anchoring Jesus' parable of the Sower as the key scriptural foundation for this book in the preface, in chapter 1 Pickerd shows how God has been on a mission throughout the Old and New Testaments. This chapter lays the groundwork for the rest of the book by demonstrating that teaching is as valid a Christian mission field as more traditional ones, such as foreign church planting and evangelism. Pickerd reminds all teachers that it is time to fully engage in our calling as Christ-following teachers, rather than as teachers who just teach content.

In chapter 2 the author begins to tell stories from his childhood spent working with his grandparents on Saturdays and during the summers on their farm. Pickerd's grandparents were excellent farmers and model Christ followers who patiently and gently taught their grandchildren how to farm the land while modeling the Christian faith in everyday living. Chapter 2 likens a farmer studying the field to us as teachers enhancing our awareness of the current educational climate and context in which we teach.

The soil of a farm is the metaphor for the students who make up our classes, and this is Pickerd's focus in chapter 3. In addition to drawing on the different types of soil in Jesus' parable of the sower, the author discusses how our students progress through Erikson's (1980) stages of psychological development and what the implications are for teachers. To close out chapter 3, the author takes "soil samples" by giving detailed case study descriptions of a wide variety of students, including their family background, parental support/involvement (or lack thereof), interests, personalities, challenges, giftedness, peer group, self-esteem, etc.

In chapter 4, entitled "The Place of the Farmer," Pickerd explores the responsibilities of teachers who serve our Lord by interacting with others as Christ did by displaying genuine love, patience, gentleness, compassion, respect, and joy. Pickerd emphasizes that our words, deeds, behaviors, attitudes, and mannerisms will reflect to students what we truly believe about God deep in our heart. Therefore it is important that teachers have a consistent and intimate relationship with Jesus, so that the fruits of the Holy Spirit will come forth from us to encourage and bless our students, and to communicate to them what God is like. Pickerd asks us to consider how we as teachers can be "sons and daughters of encouragement" like Barnabas, whose name means "son of encouragement" (Acts 4:36).

In chapter 5, the longest, Pickerd fleshes out the practical application of how to be a "seed scattering" teacher. This chapter addresses the various roles teachers with convictions minister in the classroom. Also, he addresses the integration of teaching our content matter with other disciplines while attempting to open our students' minds to the greater, eternal purpose of life. To close chapter 5, Pickerd examines the implications of seeing, listening, and speaking for us who recognize that our classroom is our field of ministry and mission.

Cleverly using the metaphor of farming, chapter 6 connects the farmer's responsibilities after the harvest to a teacher's work after the school year ends, by calling teachers to lifelong learning in their content area and to the unceasing pursuit of wisdom and truth. Chapter 6 closes with the importance of the teacher's role as a prayer warrior to intercede for students, their students' families, and their coworkers while not neglecting to pray for their own families.

The final chapter, 7, describes how our calling as children of God does not stop at our classroom door, but extends to our colleagues, parents of our students, and members of the community surrounding our school. Pickerd challenges us to make ourselves available to God's work outside of the classroom as we come in contact with our students and their families at church, at the mall, in coffee shops, at sporting events, at entertainment venues, etc.

Commentary

One of the jewels of this seven-chapter book is the 64 discussion questions that can be used in classes, in small peer groups, in a mentorship, or for personal reflection. At only seven chapters long, this book can be read quickly, however the great onus for the reader is to think deeply about the discussion questions, to discuss their answers with others, and to pray about

these areas of our teaching and witness, asking for God's help with it all. The book is not a "how to guide" addressing every issue that a Christian teacher will face in the classroom, however it is exhaustive in addressing the larger question of how to utilize our platform as a teacher to bring glory to God while ministering his love, healing, peace, and grace to our students, coworkers, and others we encounter in our school's community.

I believe all teacher-training programs serious about faith integration should consider *Scattering Seed in Teaching* as required reading for their students. Personally, as a K-12 world language teacher who is too often stuck in survival mode, this insightful book has encouraged me to join God's work of "scattering seeds" in my own classroom and school community.

Reference

Erikson, E. H. (1980). *Identity and the life cycle.* New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Matthew Deal (deamatt@gmail.com) teaches middle school Latin and Exploratory Language in Virginia, U.S.A. His ELT journey began in 2007 at a summer English camp in southern China, and he completed his M.A. TESOL at Biola University in 2016. Matthew espouses a relational approach to learning second languages, which is how he studied Chinese in Beijing while teaching EFL to college students. He is eager to stay connected to the TESOL community and to find future opportunities in the field.

What School Leaders Need to Know About English Learners

Jan Edwards Dormer. Alexandria, VA: TESOL International Association, 2016.
Pp. vi + 128, $39.95 (paper), ISBN 978-1-942799-84-9.

Reviewed by Emily Burden, Cornerstone University

Dormer's book engages school leaders in thinking critically about issues involving English Language Learners (ELLs) in their schools. The author presents a clear need for more understanding of issues relating to ELLs among school leaders. Dormer offers a brief overview of information to familiarize school leaders with the field of TESOL and shares tools and recommendations that can be used in a variety of educational contexts, including Christian schools and international English programs. She challenges readers to look past the "set programs" of their school and look at each ELL student with new eyes, as someone valuable, unique, and capable. Dormer's experiences as a language learner herself and as an ELL teacher are keenly visible through these pages. This book offers a wide range of beneficial information in a clear, interesting, and easy-to-read format.

Summary

Chapter 1, "How Can a Good Understanding of English Learning Transform Your School?" (p. 1), offers staggering statistics of the ELL population shift in public education. Dormer proposes ways that school leaders can help their schools be more prepared to take on the task of welcoming ELLs and supporting them effectively, such as "fostering a school culture that values and welcomes multiple languages and cultures" (p. 3) and "creating school schedules and courses conducive to meeting ELL needs" (p. 9).

Chapter 2, "What Do You Need to Know About TESOL?" (p. 15), introduces the various TESOL acronyms, including the differences between them. Dormer contemplates the harms of ineffective English language programs, narrowing down the top three problems as being: unprepared teachers, badly implemented language programs, and the education of undocumented students (pp. 23-24). She calls school leaders to action and to make changes on their campuses.

Chapter 3, "What Does It Mean to 'Know English'?" (p. 29), challenges the definition of "language" and argues the complications that are associated with defining it. Dormer emphasizes particular areas of difficulty and how language and culture are both required in order for ELLs to be competent in knowing academic English.

Chapter 4, "How Does Someone Learn English?" (p. 43), compares scientific research of first language acquisition and additional language acquisition based on past and current theories. Dormer debunks common myths about ELL language acquisition (e.g., "All people acquire languages in the same way," p. 57) and offers comprehensive explanations. She stresses the benefit to having positive teacher/student interaction as being a main factor in students' language learning success.

Chapter 5, "How Does Someone Learn English in School?" (p. 67), narrows down the process to eight principles for successful language acquisition in schools. Dormer addresses how teacher qualities are vitally important in the process and comments on making the learning meaningful as being a key element. She examines how students undergo an identity transition as they learn a new language and explains that teachers can step in and help students by acting as a "safety net for their feelings of discouragement" and modeling positive identities (p. 75).

Chapter 6, "Where Can an ELL Best Acquire Language and Learn Content?" (p. 87), addresses the need for school leaders to be aware of each individual ELL student rather than

lumping all ELLs together during placement. Dormer reminds readers that cultural backgrounds are the unseen "roots," along with students' native languages, that compose their identity. This chapter also discusses language levels, issues in assessment, and program models.

The book ends with a "Professional Development Guide" (p. 113) that can help school leaders and teachers create optimal learning environments for ELLs. Two Appendices round out the book, focusing on Acronyms in TESOL and offering a sample Home Language Survey.

Commentary

Dormer aspires to educate school leaders that need a refresher course or who are not familiar with TESOL issues. The simple layout of the material is easy to navigate. The ideas presented are well developed but basic, providing practical examples that apply in every school setting. Each chapter ends with a *Grab and Go* section that enunciates the most important points from the chapter, plus References for further reading. For a more thorough look into TESOL issues, a reader might go elsewhere, but to grasp the basics, this is an excellent starter book.

This book accomplishes Dormer's goal of providing a simple but thorough volume addressing the aspects of ELL programs that school leaders need to know. Dormer creates a concise explanation of the needs, offers helpful illustrations, and provides professional development ideas that can spur school leaders on to successful ELL programs. This book is recommended for all school leaders and teachers that are interested in bettering their campuses, including those who teach at Christian or missionary schools.

Emily Burden (emily.burden@cornerstone.edu) is completing her M.A. in TESOL at Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.